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Cash farming for rice is the only extension of a Southeast Asia subsistence farming crop into commercial farming on a large scale; only a negligible proportion of coconut-growing is for export, though this too, is an extension of Southeast Asia subsistence farming. It has been inevitable that subsistence farmers and the techniques they developed for rice have set the character of commercial rice farming which has been pioneered by local people and continues to be essentially a non-mechanised produce whose volume comes more from area and less from intensive farming.

RICE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:
ANNUAL AVERAGES PER QUINQUENNIUM

| *Period* | *Million Acres Under Rice* | *Production Million Tons Clean Rice* | *Net Exports from SE.A. (Million Tons Clean)* | *Per Cap. Utilisation (kgms.)* | *Yield in Tons per Acre* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1916–20 | 38.3 | 13.5 | 3.9 | 119 | .352 |
| 1921–25 | 43.6 | 15.3 | 4.6 | 137 | .352 |
| 1926–30 | 47.5 | 16.5 | 4.7 | 131 | .348 |
| 1931–35 | 49.6 | 16.7 | 5.2 | 117 | .337 |
| 1936–40 | 51.4 | 17.5 | 5.0 | 118 | .339 |
| 1946–50 | 48.1 | 15.6 | 1.9 | 98 | .325 |

*For* 1951 *it is estimated that Southeast Asia sowed about* 50 *million acres of paddy, probably producing* 16 *million tons cleaned rice. The exports may total* 3 *million tons. These figures suggest the consumption had declined to below* 100 *kgms. per person, but this is not reliable since unreported dealings were going on and reported facts were not necessarily the true ones.*

*Other Food Crops.*—The other commercial food crops, sugar, coffee, tea, cinchona and oil palm total much smaller areas than rice farming. Broadly, these innovations were developed by European colonial planters opening up what were very largely virgin territories, normally in the form of large estates calling for a labour force which derived only in part from local people, the rest being obtained by introducing labour from outside. In the Philippines and in Java the first European essays in agriculture caused serious interactions on local land customs; in Siam an aristocratic feudal system enabled commercialisation to be introduced without external intervention. These crops tended to be perennial cultivations, taking advantage of the continuous growing season of the region. In due course this has led to a large production, causing the external price to drop, especially as there has

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243 small-scale water-control methods had in fact existed in this region before; the earlier technological interest was to expand rice production by increased water-control on specially fertile, generally volcanic, upland soils. The objective then and now was the same—to cultivate the most fertile areas; the difference was that the volcanic soils attracted local attention and were within the capacity of local people, considerably earlier than the deltaic soils.

• [439]

SOUTHEAST ASIA RICE EXPORTS AND IMPORTS
(million metric tons clean)

| | *Exporters* | | | *Importers* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Burma* | *Indochina* | *Siam* | *East Indies* | *Malaya* | *Philippines* |
| 1915 | 2.12 | 1.09 | 1.0 | .55 | — | .22 |
| 1920 | 2.0 | 1.09 | .25 | .22 | — | .07 |
| 1925 | 3.32 | 1.33 | 1.18 | .50 | .41 | .10 |
| 1930 | 2.95 | 1.02 | .93 | .62 | .60 | .01 |
| 1935 | 2.93 | 1.52 | 1.38 | .36 | .48 | nil |
| 1940 | 2.50 | 1.40 | 2.00 | .06 | .70 | .1 |
| 1950 | 1.17 | .09 | 1.48 | .28 | .50 | .16 |

A further process at work has been a decline in Southeast Asia consumption of rice per person over the last 30 years, which made possible the expanding exports of rice at a time when population was rapidly increasing. The declining consumption seems to be due to slight changes in diet habit; maize, potatoes and tapioca have steadily entered into local meals and the proportion of vegetables has increased, more especially as it has come to be realised that the dietetic value of meals exclusively based on rice, the custom in Southeast Asia for a long time, is low, as indicated by the small stature and delicate bones of Southeast Asia peoples.

245 Commercial agriculture has largely revolved round tree cultivation (arboriculture rather than agriculture) in which the continuous growing period produces maximum effects. In this tendency may be seen a return to the tree vegetation which is indigenous to equatorial Southeast Asia, and away from the annual and deciduous plants more suited to ecologies associated with the seasonal margins of the tropics. Labour difficulties too are eased to some extent by tree crops whose periodicity is better spread than in the case of annual crops. To the labour difficulty also is due the trend towards devolving arboriculture from plantation systems

that about one-third of its prewar estate area was being tapped in 1947, representing two-thirds of the area tappable.

In the food crops, surplus margins were more slowly restored. Exports of Southeast Asia rice totalled about a million tons during 1946, as against a combined export of 5.7 million tons annually for 1936–40. The drop in production of this staple was greatest in the case of Burma because there the dislocation by war had been greatest, but by the 1946–47 season, about two-thirds of Lower Burma rice acreages were back in cultivation, as against half in 1945–46. In Cochinchina over 70 per cent of the rice area was being cultivated in 1946–47. Siam which was untouched by military campaigns reported 10.6 million acres under cultivation in rice for 1946–47 (22 per cent more than 1939–40)—the only territory to show a substantial increase of rice acreage in the immediate postwar years.

A postwar feature has been the general decline in rice yields, mostly an effect of loss of draught cattle, though to report low yields was a convenient cover for black market sales. The consequence of lost production in local food was felt more in places like Malaya which has specialised in non-food commercial agriculture, than in any other territories of Asia, which customarily needed to import only a small margin and not the majority of their rice. For the Philippines in 1947, the United Nations reported that *per capita* consumption of rice was actually higher than in 1939 by about 5 per cent.

Since labour shortage has been prominent as a factor operating against postwar commercial agriculture, the subsistence farmer and the diversified smallholder have assumed far greater significance than before. Over 55 per cent of Malaya's rubber production for 1946 was from smallholders, a proportion which had been as much as 85 per cent in the early months of that year, yet fell to 45 per cent in 1950 (cf. 39 per cent in 1940).

The vegetable oils soon came back into production and by early 1947 monthly production in Southeast Asia was not far short of 1941 production and now exceeds it.

The general lowering of food acreages and of yields, combined with the enforced reversion to subsistence agricultural forms, has a special significance for Southeast Asia food supplies over the next few years, because the restricted food supply comes at a time when population is rapidly increasing, at the rate of about 20

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434 averaged below $2 per person per annum and revenues were of that low order for all Southeast Asia countries except Malaya, where it was about $70 per person, a sign that Malaya, of all these countries, was the one where work and activities centred on money and had moved farthest from the subsistence principle.

It has to be noted that the small amount of money involved in such ecologies does not mean poverty in the European sense : it represents only that margin of necessities which is outside the subsistence ecology. In addition to the little money it obtains, each family in general has both its food and its domestic equipment produced by itself, or in conjunction with helpers from the village community. This is a state of society long since outgrown in Europe though we have to allow for it in every phase of Southeast Asia industry and trade and to assume it will continue to play a part in future changes.

### Agricultural Processing

256 249 Because Southeast Asia is so overwhelmingly agricultural its mechanical industries relate largely to agricultural processes. Rice mills, sugar mills, starch factories (from sago and tapioca) and sack factories, have all grown up in connection with agricultural processing in every one of these territories. In addition, rubber factories, oil presses and sugar mills have been established on western lines in association with European-style agricultural developments. The fabrication of rubber has not gone far within this region; tyres have been made in Java where also mass-produced rubber shoes were made for Southeast Asia markets. For the most part, mechanical processing industries are located peripherally to the countries concerned and they operate primarily for immediate export, though small rice, brick and sugar factories have spread inland away from coastal sites.

### Textiles

439 288 Apart from food, the chief personal need of Southeast Asia people is cloth and the demand for textiles ranks as by far the greatest single item of fabricated goods. Most of the textiles recorded are imported; the domestic industry has tended to disappear except in the remoter districts, and textile factories have not been set up to any extent within Southeast Asia. Cotton spinning at Semarang, Tegal and Damak and some 200 small

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weaving factories in Java, were the leading developments in local textile industries, but the bulk of cloth and even of raw cotton has been brought in from abroad. Just before the war Southeast Asia was absorbing textiles to the value of well over $300 million per annum; much of it was cheap cloth from Europe, India and Japan, but there was a substantial need for the very finest cotton cloth produced anywhere and quite an exacting local standard of qualities. Should this huge demand for textiles stimulate local industry within the new nationalist units, Burma, Siam and Indochina may improve the quality and output of their present scanty and very inferior raw cotton.

Road and rail management, engineering maintenance and port industries form a leading group of mechanical industries directly affecting local techniques and introducing forms of industrialisation on western lines. The capital equipment for these activities is imported as are nearly all metal manufactures for other purposes. Manufactured goods form the largest single category of goods moving into Southeast Asia, to a total of nearly $500 million annually before the war. These manufactured imports chiefly went to urban consumers, yet simple farming tools and articles like needles and scissors went in large quantities far into every country. Although this category was broad, the components were very varied so that the value of each ranked comparatively low. Manufactured articles of western type showed little sign of being made locally, except in Java where successful attempts at making electric equipment had gone on for some years to supply the Southeast Asia markets with very cheap electrical goods like lamps and filaments, suggesting the possibility that Java may become industrialised on the Japanese pattern for mass production methods, and using part-time or women workers. In neighbouring territories, however, there are no such immediate prospects because labour has proved costly in proportion to its skill.

## Mining Industries and Prospects

Mining industries of great value have developed in Malaya, Burma, Sumatra, Borneo, the Philippines and the small islands east of Sumatra. Tin and petroleum have been the region's specialities so far and these have assumed great importance, combining to be chiefly responsible for the prewar annual exports of about $650 million of mineral products from Southeast Asia

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316 439 to the rest of the world. Iron ore and bauxite occur in large quantities, but without location convenient to the power needed to develop them. Gold has had special significance in Philippines mining, yet though found at many points, it ranks low for the region as a whole. Both tin and petroleum give rise to processing industries of smelting and refining which take place close to the streams of international traffic, particularly associated with Singapore and Penang. They play little part in local life, employ few people and go on at isolated points.

These mineral industries (which employed less than 250,000 persons before 1941) suffered from the war both by destruction in denial action and by neglect, so that they practically started anew from 1945. Whether they will all return to their prewar status remains to be seen. Southeast Asia provides the most prolific source of petroleum accessible to the Indian and Far Eastern markets and the wells are rapidly re-opening under the international oil groups which own them (output 1949, 9.0 million tons). Tin is coming back into production again more slowly because it needs more capital equipment such as pumps and dredges, which cannot be readily obtained, and there are some doubts whether world need for tin is likely to continue as great as before. The length of life of Malayan tin mines, the main prewar source, has been questioned, yet the little-known islands just south of Malaya are thought to contain extensive deposits of untouched tin likely to come into production in due course, though carefully screened for the time being from prospectors by local authorities. By 1950 the total tin output of Southeast Asia was about 99,000 tons.

## Labour and Power for Industrialisation

464 Whether intensified industrialisation of Southeast Asia on the basis of these minerals is possible, turns upon two factors. Labour continues to be scarce; many prewar mining labourers dispersed during the war years when mining stagnated, and any immediate diversion of labour from agriculture to mining, even if possible under the tight ecology of the prevailing subsistence farming, is likely to prejudice local food supplies which depend basically on hand-grown rice.

316 Furthermore, Southeast Asia has limited sources of mechanical power, a factor not only of consideration regarding expansion of

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additional expansion under the almost autarchic conditions of the war period. Political instability within India can, however, offset this advantage.

It is to be noted that the great markets for goods manufactured from Southeast Asia commodities so far have been in Europe and the United States. The little nations of Southeast Asia seem ill-prepared to absorb much of them for some years. Because food is produced in such large quantities in this typically agricultural zone, we may not overlook the possibilities of manufacturing foods in forms such as biscuits, jam and canned varieties. Hitherto the tight association with industrialised colonial powers has to some extent dissuaded intense application to the miscellany of industrial productions possible in Southeast Asia, yet the local nationalisms and the incentive to establish more balanced social and communal systems tend to encourage local industries. Burma, Siam and Indochina before the war were only lightly touched by these tendencies to manufacture.

From the point of view of the rest of the world, a re-orientation of the tremendous quantity of Southeast Asia's primary agricultural materials now handled by processing industries already established in Europe and the United States, would have major effects, not least on the ability of those industries to maintain their manufactured exports at levels which have been increasing over the last century. Thus, a nationalistic Southeast Asia driving towards self-sufficiency industrially is likely to diminish the international trade streams to and from this region, though it may progressively increase the occupational activities and living standards of Southeast Asia people.

## Intra-Regional Trade

A total value of about $400 million was involved in the prewar interchange of goods and commodities between one part and another of the Southeast Asia region. This intra-regional trade was relatively small because the component units of the region produced much the same commodities and goods, by reason of which the countries tended to be rivals rather than customers of one another. An additional factor was the pull of several metropolitan areas, Britain, France, Holland and the United States, which acted to lessen intra-regional trade and to lessen the regularisation and rationalisation of production in Southeast Asia as a whole. Food

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438 439 deficiencies of local people were largely met by intra-regional trade, particularly the rice and fish movements from Burma, Siam and Indochina to the other territories. The layout of the whole region relative to transocean shipping routes drew much of the intra-regional trade to major foci like Singapore, from which point manufactured imports from other parts of the world were also distributed within the region. Singapore has functioned for a long time as entrepôt centre for the region and some two-thirds of its import values derived from Southeast Asia. Siam had a very balanced trade relation with its surroundings, over 40 per cent of both its imports and its exports being related to Southeast Asia territories.

## Extra-Regional Trade

439 The overall trade movements from the region to the rest of the world were huge; annually over the quinquennium 1936-40 commodities valued at well over $2,000 million went overseas from Southeast Asia and some $1,200 million of goods moved into the region, quite apart from the intra-regional trade. The disparity of values moving in and out of Southeast Asia has for years been paralleled in the trade of each country, the disproportion being least in the case of the Philippines and greatest for Burma. The disparity went deeper; since the Southeast Asia output was of bulky, raw or partially-processed commodities, the outgoing tonnage far exceeded the incoming tonnage and the carriage involved made Southeast Asia one of the busiest oceanic shipping areas of the world, an activity swollen further by the great amount of coastwise shipping made necessary by the insular character of the region. It was largely the absence of this shipping which paralysed the region during the war years.

By 1947, re-establishment of trade flows was becoming apparent, though Indochina and the East Indies were still largely isolated. Southeast Asia commercial activity then showed a new pattern: about $3,500 million of goods went into the region as against $2,500 million passing out. While these figures included both intra- and extra-regional trade, they were mostly the latter; they involved an entirely new valuation of goods and a substantial addition could be added for "black" or unreported trade.

Nevertheless, the overall figures showed that Southeast Asia was absorbing far more in value than it was exporting. Part of the

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disparity could be attributed to replacement of capital equipment, yet it may indicate the beginnings of a great change in the function of Southeast Asia in world trade. Postwar revival by 1950 had become most spectacular in Malaya which, though the smallest political unit of the region, had re-established its trade and was responsible for nearly half the total trade of the region. The Philippines also recovered quickly, to be involved in a quarter of the trade.

## Convergence of Routes

This region stands at zones of convergence for transoceanic routes between the very densely populated areas of India and China, and also between those areas and Europe, Australia and North America, so that international shipping is likely to converge upon Southeast Asia independently of purely colonial considerations which have hitherto specially drawn the Philippines into the U.S. shipping circuits, the East Indies into the Dutch, and the rest of Southeast Asia into the British shipping streams. French shipping has been relatively little involved, certainly not more than Danish, Italian and German and far less than the Japanese.

The convergence of shipping routes has left a heritage of convergent air routes which are tending to follow closely the shipping lanes, making Southeast Asia the terminus of the air lanes from North America down through the belt of narrow seas along the West Pacific (linking the United States with Japan, China and Java population centres) and from Europe across the "Eurasian Mediterranean" of Southwest Asia and India, as well as a junction for lines to Australia, although the population and production of the latter scarcely justifies considering it in the long term as a major objective of airways in the way that India and China must continue to be.

## Convergence of Interests

There is thus much to be coveted in Southeast Asia, the raw materials and the food it produces, the manufactured goods it needs, the commission on the coming and going involved, are all desirable and those who share or have shared in its $15,000 million 1950 trade turnover are inevitably defensive of their portion. Colonial powers have jealously divided up these assets in the past and it is to be expected that there will always be from India and

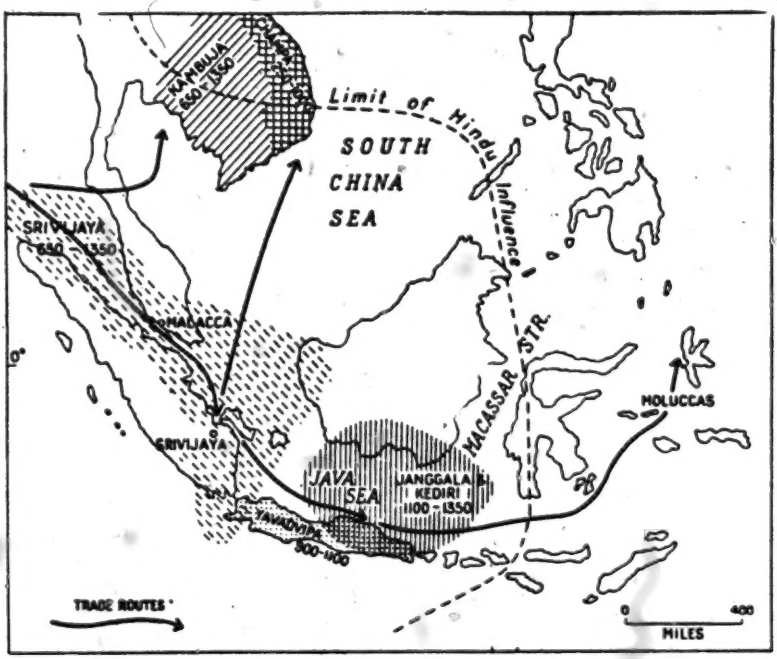


FIG. 113.—Historic Pattern of Southeast Asia during Indian Colonial Period

implements had not in any case developed far enough to deal with stone. Hence monumental evidence in Southeast Asia is so largely Indian, an introduction by foreigners using styles and techniques developed in their home settings, and most developed in the drier parts of this region, where stone is more accessible. On the clay lands, historic brick structures, also an Indian innovation, weather to nothing very quickly. At Angkor may be seen the power of quick-growing tropical trees to shatter and break down temples and palaces built of stone and lateritic blocks.

This, too, is a region of natural calamities, difficult though it is to pin-point them. Little kingdoms have been wiped out in a few hours by Javanese volcanoes, as in A.D. 1006 when the flourishing city of Dharmavamsa (a great king of Central Java) was reduced to ashes by "a great calamity," probably an explosion and lava outflow of the Merapi volcano. Settlements along rivers have been obliterated when huge mud-flows swept down from loose ashes on the flanks of new eruptions, possibly accounting for our ignorance of east Sumatran kingdoms. Coasts have altered through the years

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and deltas have changed; areas which once were shallow sea have become sedimented to swamps, a process by which Cambodia has been cut off as the Lower Mekong built up mud-flats isolating Tonle Sap from contact with the sea. The evolution of new routes has caused some old centres of power to fade into mere fishing villages, evidenced in the decline of Takhola and Bandon after the sea route through the Straits of Malacca became more generally

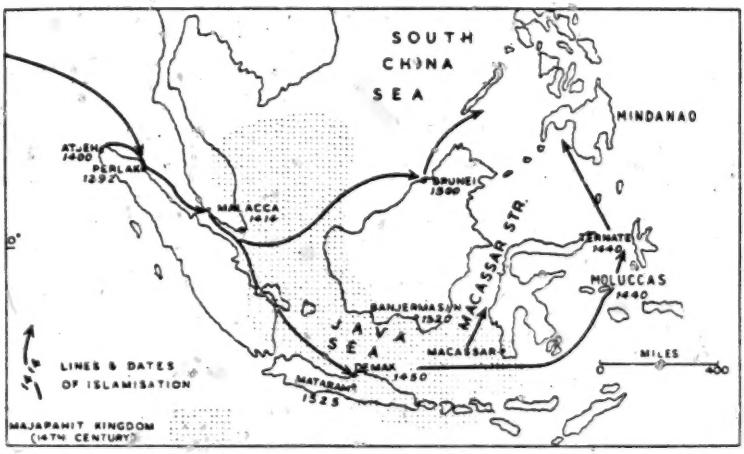


FIG. 114.—Historic Pattern of Southeast Asia at the Islamisation Period

used than that across Kra. Plagues have laid waste whole cities, as when Uthong in about 1350 was devastated by cholera and its population fled. The region is still one where malaria, dysentery, cholera and plague are endemic, more especially in the older, more congested territories like Java. These diseases have frequently flared up into appalling epidemics killing thousands of people, epidemics reflecting a relation between bacteria and the climate (which encourages bacterial reproduction), the population density, the difficulties of sewage disposal and social habits of indifference to hygiene (which has no ill effects among lonely settlements in the forest but becomes a social menace in towns). Fevers and virulent diseases have frequently ravaged the local people, debilitated them, and wiped out their settlements. The region is strewn with ruins of towns now abandoned, and with ruined groups of people who have degenerated physically by disease and under-nourishment. South-east Asia proved capable of engulfing rather than enshrining those moving into it to live.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953) 1956 AO7 Central Thai
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Southeast Asia and World History

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At the present time the whole of Southeast Asia is obviously and dangerously entangled in world history. Often it is suggested that this is quite a new thing. Actually, there is nothing new in the entanglement of Southeast Asia in world history. After pointing out that the Southeast Asian states derived their civilization from India but fell within the political orbit of China, Professor Coedes summarizes the consequences:

> Most of these states have reacted to the great shocks that have disturbed the Indian peninsular and the Middle Kingdom. The conquests of Samudragupta in the Ganges Valley and South India in the 4th century and the expansionist policy of Chola emperors of Tanjore in the 11th century have had their repercussions on the other side of the Bay of Bengal. Even more markedly has the history of Further India been influenced by affairs in China. The Chinese have never looked favorably on the growth of strong powers in the southern seas, and it deserves notice that Funan, Cambodia, and the Javanese and Sumatran realms reached the zenith of their prosperity during just those epochs when the great dynasties of China were enfeebled. Also these countries are mutually linked together by numerous ties, geographic and economic, and every revolution in any one of them, by disturbing the whole region, has had repercussions on the others.[5]

Similarly, Krom suggests links between the course of events in India and the spread of Indian settlements over Southeast Asia.[6]

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In a talk on the Tropical Far East and world history at the Siam Society, Bangkok, Furnivall pointed to economic

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5. J. S. Furnivall, "The Tropical Far East and World History," Journal of the Siam Society, Volume 39, Part 2 (January 1952), pp. 120-21.

6. Ibid., p. 121.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai
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648 geography for an explanation of the relations between South-
439 east Asia and the outer world. The history of the China trade and the spice trade, Furnivall indicated, had revealed that Southeast Asia was of minor importance in each trade route, but it was significant as a byway along both routes, and it was sensitive accordingly to convulsions affecting the course of trade along either route. In Furnivall's words:

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> For China there have always been two main lines of communication with the West: the land route across central Asia, and the sea route round the coast. Throughout the ages traders have followed whichever route seemed easier. Both routes, however, are liable to interruption. The land route is exposed to wild hordes in central Asia and to the results of political catastrophes in the Middle and Near East. The sea route can easily be blocked at its main gateway, the Straits of Malacca. Yet, when both these two main routes are blocked, there is still a byway. Traffic can still find a way down the great rivers of South-east Asia -- the Irrawaddy, the Salween, the Mekong, and the Red River -- diverging when convenient to the shorter rivers, the Sittang and the Menam. Time and again these rivers, and especially the Irrawaddy, have played a part in history.
>
> For the trade in spices from the Moluccas, the Straits of Malacca are of supreme importance; there is only one main route. But this narrow channel can easily be held against outsiders. When it is blocked, however, there are two byways. One byway is through the Sunda Straits between Java and Sumatra; repeatedly throughout the course of history we find mention of Bantam under various names, and of places close to Bantam -- Jakarta or Batavia, and Benkulen. There is also a second byway, from various points along the western coast of Burma and Malaya cutting across the mainland to the Gulf of Siam or continuing further to the Mekong and Annam.[7]

Colonization, Old and New

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The search for gold following Vespasian's placing of an embargo on this precious metal from Rome during 69-79 A.D.

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7. Ibid., p. 121-22.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai
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175 was suggested by Furnivall as a cause of the foundation of
• 439 Indian trading centers at convenient sites along the coasts
648 and main rivers of Southeast Asia. The same author places the date of the first Indian colonization in the area at about 150 A.D.[8] Harrison, however, maintains that the first definite Indian settlements were established in the first century A.D.[9]

175 Indian settlements were typically colonial in the
177 old sense of foreign settlement without foreign rule. The-
563 settlers came as traders, intermarried with the local people,
648 acquired wealth, and formed an aristocracy. Then, as new migration ceased, the Indian rulers and aristocracy were absorbed into the people. In the inscriptions, the language and written characters took on native forms, and the names of persons and places were no longer Indian but native. Similarly, in the religious monuments and other buildings a native style was superimposed on the earlier Indian models.

175 Most authors have credited these Indian settlers
177 with having brought Indian culture to Southeast Asia. Harrison,
648 for example, takes for granted that "Indians who voyaged overseas to Southeast Asia naturally brought with them the ideas and practices of Hinduism and Buddhism."[10] He further speculates that "traders, adventurers and craftsmen were followed by Brahman and Buddhist priests and teachers,

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8. Ibid., p. 127.

9. Brian Harrison, South-east Asia (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1954), p. 10.

10. Ibid., p. 12.

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carrying the civilizing influence of Indian cultural and spiritual life and implanting it in these new lands by introducing the art of writing and the classical Sanskrit language and literature; bringing as well their own vernacular languages to enrich the vocabularies of Southeast Asia."[11] It may be argued, nevertheless, that since there is little good evidence for any large Indian emigration to Southeast Asia, much Indian culture could have been brought back by cosmopolitanized Southeast Asian traders who often spent months in India waiting for the monsoons to change their direction.[12] It should be noted in this connection that during this time of early Indian colonization trade relations were also extended westward by Indonesians (who earlier reached Madagascar) and other Southeast Asians.

During the expansion of Islam, from 1350 to 1500, Moslem colonization followed the Indian pattern. Thus we may say that formerly a colony was merely a settlement in a foreign land and the settler had little or no political connection with the home land. The Indian and Moslem became foreign rulers, but they did not establish foreign rule. Subsequently, the Portuguese and Spaniards came as royal agents and with a warrant from the Pope to undertake both the conquest and conversion of the people. The old idea of a colony as a settlement survived: there were grandees

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11. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

12. The author is indebted to Professor Lauriston Sharp for the development of this idea.

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648 were revolutionized by the techniques and aims of the West.
175 After 1850, European-owned steamships began the gradual
177 process of taking over the bulk of the inter-port trade
648 from native sailing boats and Chinese junks. The opening
439 of the Suez Canal in 1869 made possible the great modern
505 expansion of Western rule and trade, and thereby brought about the economic and social revolution which has created the Southeast Asia of today. The year 1870 is the real dividing-line between medieval and modern in the history of Southeast Asia.[14]

175 Whereas during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eight-
177 eenth centuries the various European nations active in South-
433 east Asia had, on the whole, limited themselves to trading
439 and acquisition of high-priced nonbulky commodities, such
648 as spices, the economic policy of the nineteenth century called for large quantities of bulky goods, such as sugar, fibers, oil seeds, coffee, and copra. Since the peasantry of Southeast Asia, almost without exception, raised only subsistence crops and had only limited surplus, it became necessary for the colonial powers to increase agricultural production. This was done in two ways: through the application of pressure on the peasantry to produce for export, and through the development of large-scale plantation agriculture.[15] The shift of emphasis from trade to production

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14. Harrison, op. cit., p. 197.

15. Karl J. Pelzer, "The Resource Pattern of Southeast Asia," Southeast Asia in the World Today, ed. Phillips Talbot. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951, p. 109.

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thus set a new stage -- the development of the natural resources of the whole region.

This change-over from a subsistence economy to a commercial economy involved the large-scale expansion of traditional crops or the development of new commercial crops. It was stimulated by the introduction or expansion of a money economy, the flow of capital and the development of land and sea transport. It was supported by Western technology, methods of administration and systems of justice. This whole process greatly affected the traditional institution, upsetting the balance of a medieval world. The free, individualist spirit of Western rule and commerce cut at the roots of traditional social life, undermining the corporate strength of family and village. But the most serious direct threat of the new economic forces was to the peasant's ownership of land. Expanding economies, new money taxes and cheap imports meant better business than ever for the money lender. Many peasants became ruined by debt and lost their lands. Indebtedness and debt slavery were not new in Southeast Asia; the latter was fairly soon stamped out, but the former now became much more widespread than before, resulting in the creation of a landless proletariat.[16]

## Characteristics of Current Southeast Asian Economy

In spite of all the differences among the countries of Southeast Asia in the natural environment, ethnic

16. Harrison, op. cit., p. 210.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953) 1956 AO7 Central Thai
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433 affected by these few importing countries' determination
648 to be self-sufficient in food.

181 A dual economy as a distinctive character of colonial
433 rule is a theory propounded by some Dutch economists who contend that in tropical dependencies there are two distinct systems of economy. In the Western sector economic forces act in strict accordance with the economic laws enunciated by the earlier classical economists; but in the Eastern sector these laws have no force, and Western economic principles are inapplicable. The Western sector is ultra-capitalist since economic forces act freely, not even subject to the social inhibitions which still restrain them in Europe or the Western world; the Eastern sector, on the other hand, is precapitalist, with prestige carrying more weight than profit and communal influence restraining the individual desire of gain.[17] One
433 438 439 of the consequences of a dual economy is that it is difficult to conduct business because the people will not trade on
648 Western lines. Inefficiency in trade leads to high operational cost and thus to social waste. Moreover, there is a likelihood of exploitation of indigenous people by Western traders as well as by foreigners of Asian origin who are free from social restraint.

563 One feature that has long been common to the countries of Southeast Asia and is so obvious that it could not fail

17. J. S. Furnivall, "Cooperation, Competition, and Isolation," Southeast Asia in the World Today, ed. Phillips Talbot, op. cit., p. 71.

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# ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

## ITS HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY AND DIPLOMATIC CLIMATE

John L. Christian

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AN apposite instance of the interdependence of geography and history is provided by the tense rivalry between Great Britain and France in Southeast Asia before 1910. This rivalry, which was essentially a problem in the historical geography and diplomatic climate of the times, had its origin in the astonishingly persistent belief that somewhere between the Bay of Bengal and the South China Sea would be found a short route to the wealth and trade of interior China, particularly Yunnan and Szechwan.

Contemporaries regarded it as axiomatic that a Sino-French or Siamese-French war over French aggressions in Indochina would result in an Anglo-French war. Indeed, twice (in 1893 and 1896) the two countries were on the verge of battle for control of the Menam and Mekong routes to Yunnan. But geography and malaria were against the diplomats. These routes never have come into use; and the area where Burma, French Indochina, and Thailand now march in a common frontier is today one of the least-known regions of all Asia.

Largely because of the existence of close ties between the two countries since the maturing of the Entente Cordiale of 1904, it is easy to forget that they were in acrimonious rivalry in Southeast Asia for decades, particularly from 1862 to 1904, when Britain kept careful watch over French activities from Oman and Afghanistan in the Middle East to New Caledonia and the New Hebrides in the South Seas. In this instance certain historicogeographical aspects of the problem are basically more important than the usual facets of diplomacy and politics.

### Beginnings of French and British Interests

Historically, French interest in the lands east of Suez began with the organization of the French East India Company, in 1604, the dispatch of the first French ships to the Orient, in 1611, and the beginnings of the French Oriental establishments, in the middle of the century. As early as 1631 the French regarded Madagascar as of particular value because of its favorable location for extending their trade to Southeast Asia.[1] By 1663 French priests were acquainted with coastal Burma, Siam, and Cambodia and in that year made their first crossing of the Malay Peninsula, near modern Tenasserim, while

[1] The Cambridge History of India. Vol. 5. British India, 1497–1858, edited by H. H. Dodwell. London, 1929. p. 62.

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en route to Siam.[2] Shortly thereafter the French, hard pressed on the mainland of India, proposed that their headquarters be moved to the Pegu coast. The French naval expedition of six ships that reached the Bay of Bengal in 1690 had as its object the establishment of commerce with Burma and Siam. In fact, the failure of the trade of the British East India Company in Burma and Siam in the seventeenth century was traced to the superiority of French influence in those states.[3]

In the eighteenth century Dupleix was interested in Burma and Siam because of the abundance there of teakwood for shipbuilding, and he suggested to his superiors that they acquire a portion of the Burmese coast.[4] During Burma's internal strife that resulted in the establishment of the Alaungpaya dynasty in 1755, the French made the mistake of aiding the defeated Talaings, while the British aided the conquerors. As a result, Alaungpaya acquired a supply of French arms, including 1300 muskets and forty 24-pounders, together with 200 French gunners, with which Burma became the premier state in Southeast Asia. The French, meantime, evened the score by inciting the Burmese to destroy the British colony on Negrais Island.[5]

In the nineteenth century Britain sent to the native states of Southeast Asia numerous embassies that had as their primary or secondary purpose inquiry into the extent of French influence in these states. For example, the missions to Burma of Symes in 1795 and 1802 and of Canning in 1803 and 1809; that of Crawfurd in 1822 to Siam and in 1826 to Burma; that of Finlayson in 1821 and Crawfurd in 1830 to Cochinchina; and those of Captain Burney, Sir James Brooke, and Sir John Bowring to Siam in the first half of the century were all interested in British trade and French ambition.

## The Indochinese Peninsula

Ever since the early merchant adventurers were forced to pass through the Strait of Malacca or the Sunda Strait to reach the China coast the great Indochinese peninsula has been of interest to Europeans, principally as an obstacle to a direct route to the Far East, as that term is generally understood. In the past century it became common knowledge among Europeans in the Orient that at one point, far above the head of navigation, the Yangtze flows within 600 miles of the northern reaches of the Bay of Bengal, whereas it is some 4300 miles by sea from Calcutta to Shanghai. It was only natural that

[2] Adrien Launay: Histoire générale de la Société des Missions-Étrangères, 3 vols., Paris, 1894; reference in Vol. 1, p. 74.

[3] D. G. E. Hall: Early English Intercourse with Burma (Rangoon Univ. Publs., No. 1), London, 1928, pp. 138–153.

[4] V. McL. Thompson: Dupleix and His Letters, New York, 1933, p. 721; and Alfred Martineau: Dupleix et l'Inde française, 1740–1754, Paris, 1927, p. 451.

[5] D. G. E. Hall: The Tragedy of Negrais, *Journ. Burma Research Soc.*, Vol. 21, 1931, pp. 1–133.

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FIG. 1

early cartographers and pioneers of commerce should assume that the most direct route to interior China would be along one of the great meridional rivers of the Indochinese peninsula to the Yangtze.[6] At one point, somewhat north of the present Burma Road, the Yangtze, Mekong, and Salween are compressed within a distance of 48 miles (separated by ridges reaching up to 8000 feet above the floor of the adjacent valley).[7] But the Irrawaddy, contrary to early beliefs, does not rise on the Tibetan plateau as do the other great meridional rivers[8]

[6] Bruno Hassenstein: Some Contributions to the Geographical and Cartographical Literature of the Indo-Chinese Frontier Territories, n. p., n. d., gives a useful list of the principal sources on the area before 1900. Reports of early British attempts to penetrate India's northeastern frontier are summarised in "Selections of Papers regarding the Hill Tracts between Assam and Burmah," 10 vols., Calcutta, 1873.

[7] For a photographic report see J. F. Rock: Through the Great River Trenches of Asia, *Natl. Geogr. Mag.*, Vol. 50, 1926, pp. 133–186.

[8] A fact first noted in Sir Henry Yule: A Narrative of the Mission Sent by the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava in 1855. London, 1858, p. 272.

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and thus occupies a unique place among the rivers of Southeast Asia, as Professor L. Dudley Stamp has recently pointed out.[9]

Geographical and historical knowledge of the area within 300 miles of the point where the frontiers of Thailand, French Indochina, and Burma now meet was extremely sketchy until the beginning of the present century. For example, Dupuis, in his study of Tongking in 1872, prepared a map that showed the Burmese possessions reaching to the Black River, within 200 miles of Hanoi, into territory concerning which King Mindon and his successor, Theebaw, had only the slightest knowledge and no jurisdiction.[10] Dupuis was perhaps willing to show extensive Burmese territory in the hope that France would inherit Mindon's holdings; but the map was later to plague the French, who, after the British annexation of Burma, in 1886, found it to their advantage to maintain that Burma had at no time extended even to the Mekong.

## Garnier's Expedition

In 1858 France seized Saigon; in 1862 the Court of Hué signed a treaty that surrendered Cochinchina to France; and in 1867 Siam was forced to recognize the French as overlords of Cambodia. As a result of the treaty with Annam, Francis Garnier was appointed Inspector of Native Affairs in the new protectorate, with permission to travel on the Mekong. On June 5, 1866, the De Lagree–Garnier expedition left Saigon in the first organized European exploration of the hinterland of Indochina from the China side.[11] On April 29, 1867, the party reached Luang Prabang, a place seldom visited by Europeans since the Dutch trader Gerard van Wusthof arrived there in 1641.[12] By June the party had reached the point where Burma, Thailand, and French Indochina now meet. Garnier noted there the sale of British cotton goods in the bazaar of Kiang Sen; and De Lagree reported that tribes on the left bank of the Mekong were loyal to Siam. Both explorers observed the presence of Burmese agents with authority at the principal crossings of the Mekong. On August 23, 1867, De Lagree visited Keng Tung, in what was undoubtedly Burmese territory; and thereafter the British in Lower Burma were ever watchful of French designs on territory bordering the upper Mekong. The Frenchmen passed on to Kiang Hung town, which has been under Chinese sovereignty since the Sino-British boundary settlements and

[9] The Irrawaddy River, *Geogr. Journ.*, Vol. 95, 1940, pp. 329–356 (see note elsewhere in this number of the *Geographical Review*).

[10] J. Dupuis: L'ouverture du Fleuve Rouge au commerce et les événements du Tong-Kin, 1872–73. Paris, 1879.

[11] Hugh Clifford: Further India, London, 1904, pp. 129–254, gives a vivid account of the Garnier expedition. The basic source is Francis Garnier: Voyage d'exploration en Indo-Chine effectué pendant les années 1866, 1867 et 1868 . . . ; 2 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1873.

[12] Garnier seems to have been the first to make readily available a translation of Van Wusthof's diary. The translation, which was made for Garnier by M. P. Vœlkel, was printed, with Garnier's annotations, in the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Ser. 6, Vol. 2, 1871, pp. 249–289.

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treaties of 1894 and 1897, where they noted that both Burma and China had agents in the court. On March 2, 1868, the party left the Mekong, and they reached Talifu by a journey that took them directly across the route followed by British and Burmese trade to interior Yunnan. The Moslem Sultan of Tali ordered the Garnier party away from his territory. Garnier explained the action: The Sultan has mistaken us for Englishmen. After the death of De Lagree in Yunnan young Garnier took the party out by way of Hankow, whence they traveled on to Shanghai by the American steamer *Plymouth Rock*. The Garnier expedition touched the Mekong at no point above Kiang Hung, a city to which the Britisher Captain McLeod had preceded them by thirty years. McLeod made his remarkable journey from Moulmein to Kiang Hung with six elephants and was the first European to penetrate China by the Salween route for purposes of examining trade routes.

When once it had been reported[13] that Garnier intended to "strike the Irrawaddy at Bhamo" and that he was expected also at Keng Tung and Mandalay, British interest in French activities in Southeast Asia was keen. Major General Albert Fytche, Chief Commissioner of British Burma, proceeded to Mandalay and secured Mindon's signature to a treaty that compromised Burma's independence.[14] Extraterritoriality was secured (abandoned in 1879). British agents were permitted to sit in Burmese customhouses; and Burma's power to control commerce across her territory to China was further restricted. A Resident was authorized for Mandalay, and the Irrawaddy was opened for navigation by British steamers. Captain Strover was stationed as agent in Bhamo and traveled up in November, 1868, by the first British steamer to reach that river port 40 miles from the Chinese frontier.[15] He was not, however, provided with a gunboat, as had at first been suggested; nor did Britain assume control of Burma's foreign relations, as her officers in British Burma had urged.[16]

## The Sladen and Browne Expeditions

After much patient work, General Fytche in 1868 obtained permission from the King of Burma and authorization from the government of India for the dispatch of an expedition from Bhamo to Tali. Colonel E. B. Sladen, Political Agent at Mandalay, set out[17] with a group of six Europeans and a guard of 50 sepoys toward the same

[13] The London *Times*, June 7, 1868.

[14] Albert Fytche: Burma, Past and Present, 2 vols. (in 1), London, 1878. See the Anglo-Burmese treaty of Oct. 25, 1867, in *British and Foreign State Papers, 1870–71*, pp. 61 and 1303–1308.

[15] J. G. Scott, assisted by J. P. Hardiman: Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, 2 parts in 5 vols., Rangoon, 1900–1901; reference in Part I, Vol. 1, p. 64.

[16] Alexander Bowers: Bhamo Expedition: A Report on the Practicability of Re-opening the Trade Route between Burma and Western China, Rangoon, 1869, p. 100.

[17] The official account is E. B. Sladen: Narrative of the Expedition to Explore the Trade Routes to China via Bhamo, Rangoon, 1869.

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goal as the Garnier party that had left Saigon two years before. The Sladen party reached Momein (modern Tengyueh) in September, 1868, three months after Garnier's return to Saigon. Colonel Sladen could get no farther than Tengyueh, however, because of the disturbed state of the country as a result of the Panthay rebellion.[18]

Eventually Lord Salisbury yielded to the fears of British commercial interests that the French would entirely absorb the markets of Yunnan and neighboring provinces and sent an expedition to reopen British trade routes (1875). Colonel Horace Browne, accompanied by the geographer Ney Elias, who is remembered for his journey through Mongolia and his survey of the Yellow River, succeeded in getting farther than Manwyne, to Serai, where they learned that Augustus Margary, who had gone on ahead, had been murdered (1875).[19] Browne's party thereupon returned to Bhamo as the last official British attempt to open a direct route to interior China. As a matter of fact, the reports of Grosvenor, Baber, and Davenport, who were sent from Hankow to Yunnan in connection with the British demand for reparation over the Margary affair, convinced the home government that the topographic difficulties of the route from Bhamo to Yunnan and Szechwan were too great for practical railway construction.[20]

## Government of India's Lack of Interest

British officials in Burma frequently complained of the impossibility of getting the government of India to give any attention to the northeastern frontier. That government was wholly occupied with the northwestern frontier and the danger of Russian aggression through Afghanistan and the Khyber Pass. As early as the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1816–1818 Dr. Francis Buchanan, of laterite fame,[21] had advised the East India Company against "giving the Chinese any just reason for suspicion by forming pretensions to any part of the mountainous region which separates the two Empires."[22] Lord Lawrence, the Viceroy, had advised against the Sladen expedition: "His Excellency can hardly conceive any step more imprudent than for British merchants to settle in Bhamo or a British official to be stationed there for any purpose."[23] In the short viceroyalty of Lord

[18] This disturbance hindered the British and aided the French. Captain Strover reported that during his first three years in Bhamo, "not a single consignment belonging to British firms had reached Bhamo."

[19] The resultant British demand for compensation gave rise to the famed Chefoo Convention, a recent study of which is S. T. Wang: The Margary Affair and the Chefoo Agreement, New York, 1940.

[20] Particularly E. Colborne Baber: Travels and Researches in the Interior of China, *Royal Geogr. Soc. Suppl. Papers*, Vol. 1, 1882–1885, pp. 1–201, especially pp. 154–192, "Notes on the Route Followed by Mr. Grosvenor's Mission through Western Yünnan," reprinted from *Parliamentary Repts., China, No. 3 (1878)*.

[21] See this number of the *Geographical Review*, p. 177.

[22] Papers respecting the Nepaul War, London, 1824, p. 45.

[23] Letter from the government of India to Fytche, dated Simla, July 18, 1867, in Sladen, *op. cit.*, appendix T.

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Mayo the government of India, even at the risk of losing control over the trade routes to Yunnan, again stated its policy:[24] "The future annexation of Burma, or any of its adjacent states, is not an event which I . . . desire; . . . I should view with extreme regret . . . the necessity of occupation, or of assuming, even in a temporary manner, the government of any of the states lying adjacent to the province now in your charge." In short, the official attitude of the government of India has been summarized as follows: "The condition of the Northeastern frontier caused no Governor-General a single sleepless night."[25]

## Railways Suggested

Meantime, British commercial interests continued to demand that the Indian government provide facilities for trade to western China in order to forestall any French plans to acquire prior advantages in Yunnan and Szechwan. The *Parliamentary Papers* alone contain nearly twenty reports on expeditions and proposals with respect to trans-Burma trade with western China and the upper Mekong from 1824 to 1900. The most persistent advocates of British penetration of Yunnan, Szechwan, and Kwangsi from the Bay of Bengal were Captain Richard Sprye and his son, who for half a century (1840–1890) presented numerous proposals for railways and highways into western Siam, to the Shan and Laos States, and to southern China.

Perhaps the best-publicized effort was that by Archibald R. Colquhoun, a deputy commissioner in British Burma, and Holt S. Hallett, a civil engineer. Colquhoun, who was ardently anti-French, resigned his office when the government of Burma refused him leave to survey a railway route from Moulmein to Szemao by way of Chiengmai in Siam. He became a special correspondent for the London *Times*, traveled overland from Canton to Bhamo, and wrote voluminously against French designs on Southeast Asia.[26] The Colquhoun-Hallett railway plan suffered from a general suspicion that it was merely a means for "taking the King of Siam by the hand and leading him into the great British Indian family."[27] Although Colquhoun's line is actually the shortest practicable route from the Bay of Bengal to Yunnanfu (Kunming), it passes through sparsely settled country that is everywhere malarial below 4000 feet. There is not today a railway line, caravan route, or highway, British or French or Siamese, that anywhere follows the Colquhoun-Hallett survey.

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[24] Fytche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 124–125 (letter from Lord Mayo).

[25] D. G. E. Hall, edit.: The Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence, 1852–1856, London, 1932, p. xv.

[26] A. R. Colquhoun: Across Chrysê, 2 vols., 2nd edit., London, 1883; A. R. Colquhoun and H. S. Hallett: Report on the Railway Connexion of Burmah and China, London, 1887. See also H. S. Hallett: A Thousand Miles on an Elephant in the Shan States, Edinburgh and London, 1890.

[27] Philippe Lehault: France et Angleterre en Asie, Paris, 1892, p. 562.

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## British Annexation of Upper Burma

French intrigue in Upper Burma, with its consequent danger to British commercial interests, was the principal reason for the annexation of independent Burma, in 1886.[28] Jules Ferry had pledged repeatedly that no French arms should be supplied Burma through Tongking. But British suspicions were aroused upon the discovery that a Franco-Burmese agreement had been signed providing for the construction of a railway, the establishment of a Bank of Burma with French capital, control of the Burmese postal system, and establishment of a line of French steamers on the Irrawaddy.[29] The die was cast when the British learned of a secret agreement to supply arms from Tongking after the signing of the Franco-Burmese treaty of January 15, 1885.[30]

The Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, sent a message to the senior official in Lower Burma: "If, however, the present proceedings should eventuate in any serious attempt [by the French] to forestall us in Upper Burma I should not hesitate to annex the country."[31] After the publication of a "remarkably indiscreet" report by M. de Lanessan on the progress of French activities in Burma,[32] the Secretary of State on November 11, 1886, wired the Viceroy: "Please instruct General Prendergast to advance on Mandalay at once."[33]

British occupation of Upper Burma was followed by expeditions into the various Shan States tributary to King Theebaw. In 1890 a British party under Sir George Scott reached Keng Tung. Meantime both the French and the Siamese had asserted claims to parts of the former Burmese possessions. During the Franco-Burmese negotiations of 1885 Burma purported to cede part of Kiang Hung across the Mekong to the French. The British, as heirs to Theebaw's dominions, claimed the area but later awarded Kiang Hung to China on condition that it should never be ceded to another power.[34] However, the Chinese almost immediately gave part of Kiang Hung to the French.

Further difficulty arose over the substate of Mong Hsing, a trans-Mekong territory ruled by a junior branch of the governing family of Keng Tung. In March, 1894, Mr. Stirling of the Burma

[28] The British were fully aware of Burmese and French plans, which were reported in detail to the government of India. The Blue Book "Correspondence Relating to Burmah since the Accession of King Theebaw, in October, 1878," has 266 pages of dispatches. C. 4614 in *Parliamentary Papers*, 1886.

[29] Comte A. Mahé de la Bourdonnais: Un français en Birmanie, Paris, 1891. pp. 295–306.

[30] C. 4614 (*op. cit.*, footnote 28), No. 105.

[31] Sir Alfred Lyall: Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, 2 vols., London, 1905; reference in Vol. 2, p. 118.

[32] J. L. de Lanessan: Rapport fait au nom de la commission chargée d'examiner le projet de loi portant approbation de la convention complémentaire de commerce, signée à Paris le 15 janvier 1885, entre la France et la Birmanie, Paris, 1885. Lanessan became an aggressive governor general of French Indochina (1891 to 1894).

[33] C. 4614 (*op. cit.*), No. 122.

[34] Sir Edward Hertslet: Hertslet's China Treaties, 3rd edit., revised by G. E. P. Hertslet, with the assistance of Edward Parkes, 2 vols., London, 1908; reference in Vol. 1, pp. 99–109.

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Commission visited Mong Hsing; and he was followed, on Christmas Day, 1894, by Sir George Scott and Mr. Wharry, Chinese Political Adviser to the government of Burma, in connection with the Anglo-French Mekong Commission. M. Pavie, the French commissioner, had sent the French flag to Mong Hsing before the arrival of the British party, and the sawbwa had hoisted the tricolor over his palace. Pavie, who reached Mong Hsing on New Year's Day, had intended to welcome Sir George Scott to French territory. However, Scott had the French flag lowered and ran up his own. For a few months the incident had all the possibilities of an Oriental Fashoda nearly five years before the famous incident on the Nile.[35] The London *Times* had columns about the Mong Hsing incident; and Pavie in private conversation with Scott doubted the validity of French claims to the bazaar town. On January 15, 1895, a telegraphic message from the Viceroy announced an agreement with France that set mid-channel of the Mekong as the boundary.[36] Thus Mong Hsing, which had flown the British flag and had had a British post office for a year, was acquired by France. Siam's claims were quieted by the Treaty of Chantabun, which transferred all Siamese rights east of the Mekong to France. The remainder of the subordinate state of Keng Cheng went first to Siam but was acquired by France in May, 1896. British interests with respect to the Mekong frontier suffered from frequent changes of policy: Lord Roseberry favored the buffer-state idea;[37] Lord Kimberley ordered the occupation of Mong Hsing; then Lord Salisbury, "without exception the worst Foreign Secretary we ever had for matters east of Suez,"[38] gave up the state to France. The French secured a strategic, natural frontier for their Indochinese holdings and had the "further gratification of having enlarged them beyond all expectation."[39]

## Later Rivalries

Anglo-French rivalry continued in Yunnan along Burma's northern frontiers until well into the present century. Rival railway and mining claims were the most frequent causes of friction. Article XII of the Anglo-Chinese agreement of February 4, 1897, contemplated

[35] The Mong Hsing–Keng Cheng incident is treated definitively by Clarence Hendershot: The Conquest, Pacification, and Administration of the Shan States by the British, 1886–1897 (Diss., Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1936). The best French account is contained in "Mission [Auguste] Pavie Indo-Chine, 1879–1895: Géographie et Voyages," Vol. 5, Paris, 1902, pp. 264–284.

[36] "Livre Jaune: Affaire du Haute-Mekong et de Siam, 1893–1902." By Article IV of the declaration, the two governments agreed that all commercial and other advantages conceded in the two Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Szechwan either to France or to Great Britain by their respective conventions of March 1, 1894, and June 20, 1895, and future privileges should "be extended and rendered common to both powers."

[37] G. L. LaFuse: Great Britain, France, and the Siamese Question, 1885–1904 (Diss., Ph.D., Univ. of Illinois, 1935), discusses the various proposals for a buffer state.

[38] G. E. Mitton [Lady Scott], edit.: Scott of the Shan Hills, London, 1936, p. 166.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

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railway construction in Yunnan and provided for connection with Burmese lines.[40] No development, however, took place and the British abandoned their surveys beyond Bhamo and Lashio. The agreement between France and China of April 10, 1898, authorized the French to construct a railway from the Tongking frontier to Yunnanfu.[41] This was carried out, but the plans for carrying the line farther were discarded. Activities of French explorers and missionaries in Yunnan along the Burma frontier were watched closely; the British in Burma were only mildly enthusiastic about the explorations of Prince Henry of Orleans from the Mekong to Assam across the top of Burma in 1895. The British were careful to open consulates in Szemao (Es-mok) and other inland treaty ports of Yunnan and Kwangsi that had little trans-Burma trade.

Siam probably owed her independence to the desire of both her neighbors to have a buffer state between them, the British having decided that Burma was "too soft and pulpy" to serve in that capacity. As matters turned out, France got much the lion's share of territory shorn from Siam. There is not in Burma today any area that was for any length of time Siamese territory, a fact recognized by the present Thai minister to the United States, who issued a communiqué indicating that, in contrast with her present demands upon the French possessions, Thailand is entirely satisfied with her Burma frontier.[42]

British development of Singapore after 1819, introduction of steam navigation to the Orient, the opening of the Suez Canal and the American transcontinental railway in 1869 only heightened the rivalry for alternate short cuts to "the greatest market in the world." By 1882 French engineers had completed surveys of a proposed Kra canal; and on June 8, 1883, Ferdinand de Lesseps presented the completed plans to the King of Siam as "la route Français au Tonkin." That distinguished Frenchman spoke of Bangkok as "the beginning of the Menam route to Yunnan."[43]

By about 1910 the epic age of European imperialism had come to an end; and since that time there have been no considerable additions to the French and British empires east of the Red Sea. Yunnan and Kweichow, for which the rivalry was particularly acute, during the past decade were perhaps less subject to foreign influence than any other provinces of China proper. Lord Curzon (Viceroy of

[40] J. V. A. MacMurray, edit.: Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China 1894–1919 (Publs. Carnegie Endowment for Internatl. Peace, Division of Internatl. Law, Washington), 2 vols., New York, 1921; reference in Vol. 1, pp. 96–97.

[41] *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 124.

[42] *The New York Times*, Oct. 6, 1940. Britain took compensation in the Malay states of Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah, and Perak, which had been under loose Siamese protection before their cession to Britain in 1909.

[43] La Bourdonnais, *op. cit.*, pp. 233–241 and 265–284, discusses French interest in a Kra canal and contains a copy of De Lesseps' report.

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India from 1898 to 1905), for whom frontiers and imperialism in the grand manner had great fascination, forced the Iman of Muscat to renounce the lease of a coaling site to France,[44] saw the Hague Court decide in Britain's favor in 1905 the question of the grant of the French flag to Muscat dhows, carried on an intimate correspondence with King Chualalongkorn of Siam, and considered that country an outpost of the British Empire.[45] From the Olympian heights of Simla Lord Curzon took pride in Britannia's supremacy in Southeast Asia. The Indian Ocean was a British preserve: "At no point in the long stretches of British territory washed by its surf has the flag of any European rival ever been hoisted since the French colours were struck over Cuddalore in 1783."[46] Curzon dreamed of a grand trunk railway from Calais to Shanghai by way of British India and sent Major Davies to do the necessary survey work in Yunnan.[47] He believed mistakenly that India and China, the two most populous countries in the world, would in his time be joined by steel rails.

The great delusion that the Irrawaddy, the Salween, the Menam, or the Mekong would provide the entrepôt to interior China was the key to Anglo-French policy and rivalry in Southeast Asia for a century. The delusion died hard. Eventually, however, "loath as most Englishmen are to admit it," trade decided that none of these river valleys provided an economical entrance to China.[48] Likewise, it was at length realized that Indochina was not the path of empire. Both Britishers and Frenchmen, learning lessons from geography and history, agreed with Sir Henry Yule: At no time has a conqueror from India or Burma passed on to China, nor (with one minor exception) from China to India or Burma; nor did the conquests of any one of the great warriors of medieval Asia embrace any part of both countries.[49]

But the delusion was so persistent and complete that it amounted to a perfect case of mistaken identity. Meantime, "England annexed areas where she had interests to protect, France annexed areas where she *wished* to have interests to protect."[50]

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[44] Lovat Fraser: India under Curzon and After, New York, 1911, pp. 86–91, gives a convenient summary of French attempts to secure a base at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

[45] Curzon wrote a brilliant defense of Britain's record in Siam (G. N. Curzon: The Siamese Boundary Question, *The Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 34, 1893, pp. 34–55).

[46] G. A. Ballard: Rulers of the Indian Ocean, London, 1927, p. 287.

[47] H. R. Davies: Yün-nan: The Link between India and the Yangtze, Cambridge, 1909. Davies urged construction, for political reasons, of a meter-gauge line from Burma to China at a cost of £20,000,000.

[48] Clifford (quoting Colborne Baber), *op. cit.*, p. 294. A governor general of French Indochina came to the same conclusion. "French Indochina cannot be considered as a country of commercial transit. Saigon can never compete with Singapore" (J. L. de Lanessan: L'Indo-Chine Française, Paris, 1889, p. 478).

[49] Yule's introduction to William Gill: The River of Golden Sand, 2 vols., London, 1880

[50] E. V. G. Kiernan: British Diplomacy in China, 1880–1885, London, 1939, p. 187.

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only surmise that a development of the cooperative movements will be furthered as the one policy free from international complications. As to the immigration of Indians and Chinese, the local governments seem unable to chart a course between the Scylla of indigenous nationalist sentiment and the Charybdis of demands from the governments of India and China. The latter today are in a far stronger position than before the war to insist that improved working conditions and greater political privileges be accorded to such of their nationals as they permit to emigrate to Southeast Asia.

Any restoration of the prewar planting-mining economy will depend upon the resumption of Asiatic immigration. But management will be forced to grant better working and living conditions and possibly the governments will have to concede a more privileged political position to immigrant Indian and Chinese laborers. On the other hand, native nationalists throughout the area will try to curtail such immigration and will oppose granting political privileges to alien Asiatics who, they believe, will continue to feel a primary loyalty to their homelands. These opposing forces have already locked horns on the citizenship clause embodied in the Malayan Union plan—the first postwar attempt to ameliorate the political position of alien Asiatics—and the British Government has not yet resolved the equally important immigration issue.

No matter what constitutional changes emerge from the current political crisis in Southeast Asia, the governments set up throughout the area will have to face the same labor and minority problems as did their predecessors. The urge toward industrialization received an impetus from the Japanese occupation, though the synchronous growth in the industries of China and India (not to mention Japan's continuing need for export markets) will offer sharper competition to the nascent industries of the region. Moreover, shortages of labor and fuel in most of Southeast Asia cannot but curtail the expansion of even light industries and may prevent any immediate and effective way of satisfying the desire of nationalists for the establishment of large-scale and heavy industries.

The region seems destined to remain for some time predominantly a source of raw materials and a market for the industrial output of its neighbors. Before the war certain sections of these countries had entered the phase of commercialized agriculture and mining, and of processing the output—distinct advances over the traditional economies. This trend is now being accentuated, although it is influenced by such wartime developments as that of the synthetic-rubber industry. In any case the form of international organization set up to control production and sales will be different from that of the past, in which the colonial producer interests predominated. In the immediate postwar period, world shortages of the commodities produced by Southeast Asia have created a market eager for all its major output.

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try, indigenous, cultural or political subcenter. Just as Shanghai had its Nanking and Peking, so Rangoon has its Mandalay, Jakarta its Jogjakarta, Manila its Cebu, and, in a variant form, Singapore its Kuala Lumpur.

In the past these cities sited along the Asian littoral have been the funnels through which produce from the interiors have reached tidewater and the world of commerce and Western manufactures have penetrated. Through the increasingly metropolitan channels have flowed the ideas of the West as well as its material goods. In a sense they have acted both as a catalyst for social and economic change and as a cushion which modified the shock of the earlier cultural contacts.

With the exception of Singapore, the site of each of the great cities of Southeast Asia is an ill-drained riverine or coastal lowland strategically placed in relation to an exceptionally productive agricultural region. Again, with the exception of Singapore, none possesses a deep natural harbor suitable for modern ocean-going shipping. The three mainland ports are both river and ocean ports and must be reached through tortuous and shallow river channels. All are entrepôts. Jakarta and Manila are located on the most highly developed islands of the archipelagoes, for which they act as entrepôts. Only in Indonesia and Indochina are there major competitors for the two greatest ports —Haiphong, the outlet for the densely populated Tonkin delta, and Surabaya, the regional capital for the Great East of the Indies, itself an empire. Each great port virtually dominates the national import trade; all tend, however, to share some part of the national export trade with lesser ports. In spite of these great similarities, the nature and functions of the ports differ markedly. As Allen observes: "All ports are individual. History, geography, politics, and economics all contribute to making them as they are. Few universal principles apply, and attempts to force uniformity on ports which have grown up differently are bound to fail."[18] Singapore, for example, is one of the

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for his wife—but he is equally likely to put it into a piece of equipment or to hire some land. To understand the position of the peasant one must realize the structure of the economic system of which he is a part, and the values of his social system.

The peasant economy must not be thought of as simply a subsistence economy. It has a complex marketing structure which, even apart from Western influences, had an elaborate series of middlemen for making possible the diffusion of cloth, salt, iron, dried fish, spices, and other goods. The system of exchange has been intensified, and the reactions of different types of producers made more sensitive by the influence of the West. On the one side are the Western markets for primary products—coffee, spices, tobacco, copra, kapok, and, above all, rubber—the quick response to which has demonstrated how alive the Asiatic peasant is to making money if the opportunity offers. On the other side are the Western types of consumer goods, novel, attractively presented, easy to use—ranging from lamp oil, imported cigarettes, and cornflour for babies, to electric torches, bicycles, and the cinema. Conservative in his techniques of production, the peasant has shown himself enterprising in his consumption. The result has been that at many points, almost without realizing it, the peasant has become geared to the Western economic system. In the early days of European contact, he had often to be pushed as well as tempted into producing for the Western market. The scathing book, *Max Havelaar*, by the author calling himself 'Multatuli'—later known to be Douwes Dekker—has shown the kind of abuses that resulted from pushing the peasant into an enforced relation to the Western market. But naturally many of these links have been of his own seeking. In the last resort, it is the peasant's own scheme of values, his degree of acceptance of the goods and services which the West offers and which he transmutes to some extent in receiving, which determines his economic destiny.

But for the most part, the peasant has been incapable of perceiving the processes at work. The field is too vast for his comprehension. His reactions to the crisis and depression of the nineteen-thirties were direct and rational as they came under his personal observation. When prices fell he increased production of the export crops to maintain his cash returns; when that failed he retired from the struggle to utilize his backlog of subsistence cropping. But like many a farmer elsewhere, he had not understood much more than the immediate market situation. The pressure of the West has provided the peasant with a new range of wants from which he cannot rid himself even should he wish, and markets for his labour and raw materials which are an inducement to him to modify his habits. A new administrative system has given him fresh legal framework for many of his acts. A new system of taxation, though often lighter than before, is more methodical in its pursuit of defaulters. His land, the foundation of his existence, has for the most part been preserved to him, and indeed the security for his legal title to it has been much improved. But alien planta-

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Chinese



427 But the alien planta-
565 tions and even alien smallholders have threatened to grasp at it, and the
177 advances of Western medicine, so beneficial in many ways, have only accelerated the rate of increase of the population which has to seek a livelihood from it. In most parts of South East Asia the peasant is the actual owner of the land he tills, often legally under some agreement with
426 the State. But his rights to the produce are often severely limited by a heavy burden of indebtedness. The real effects of this may be less than people sometimes think, because when the debts are spread among neighbours and kinsfolk interest may be waived, repayment is sometimes protracted or ignored, and the debt may be serviced by other than material means. But there is no doubt that the peasant producer is badly hampered by his debt load. It is most pressing when debt is contracted to a member of an alien ethnic group, an Indian or a Chinese, for whom the transaction is a purely commercial one.

563 The role of alien Asiatic ethnic groups is one of the most significant
565 features in the economic and political life of the peasantry of South East
177 Asia today. For many centuries, Indian and Chinese trading influences
178 have met in the South East Asian region, and Indian religious concepts
439 have penetrated deep into many of its social systems. But for more than four hundred years the dominant commercial and political note has tended to be sounded by Europeans. Now the balance is altering. Colonialism may have set the modern structure of South East Asian society, but the patterns will persist when the colonial Powers have withdrawn. To this new society the Chinese above all have the economic key. In Indo-China, Siam, Malaya, the Philippines, and Java, the Chinese have penetrated the economic system and taken over crucial functions. They have shared in much of the wholesale import trade, they have attained pre-eminence in retailing vital imported goods to the peasant, and they act as middlemen for the collection, storage, and processing of peasant export products. As part of this process they often finance the peasant producer by advances on his crop, gaining a double profit by giving part of these advances in goods, not cash. The Chinese achievement has been remarkable. They have been kept on the margin both of the peasant society with which they deal, and of the European society with which at a later stage their growing wealth would allow them to associate. Though lacking any formal political power, which in the Orient as elsewhere is so often the passport to success, they have built up a trading structure of extraordinary toughness, elasticity, and elaboration.

565 The wider political implications of this are not my concern here. But
609 it is important to note three points in connexion with the peasant theme.
186 One is the xenophobic reaction of the local urban dwellers and of peasants
578 too, which has periodically found expression against the Chinese, as traders or residents in South East Asia, in the form of riots and other disturbances.
563 Another is the reaction of the Chinese, whose economic strength has given
241 them confidence, and who are now prepared to stand by their claim to a